Docket No.: 09868/001680 US0
(PATENT)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of:
Satoshi Suda et al.

Application No.: 10/667,607	Confirmation No.: 9764
Filed: September 22, 2003	Art Unit: 3714
For: GAME MACHINE AND GAME PROGRAM	Examiner: Robert E. Mosser

<u>AGENDA FOR INTERVIEW</u>

> **NOT FOR ENTRY IN THE RECORD**

1. *Submitted to Examiner Robert E. Mosser (Fax: 571 273 4451)*
2. *For Telephone Interview scheduled at 1PM, July 20, 2011 (Wednesday)*
3. *Requested by Mitsu Haraguchi (Leason Ellis LLP)*

Objective

To discuss the proposed amendment and argument prepared in response to the Non final Office Action mailed March 30, 2011 for the above identified application.

Attendees

Melvin Garner (Leason Ellis LLP, Reg. No. 26,272)

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Submission (<u>total 6 pages</u>)

1. Proposed amendment (2 claims)
2. Proposed argument

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PROPOSED AMENDMENT

1.   (Currently amended): A game machine comprising:

a display module having multiple display areas, each capable of displaying various symbols including optionally a wild symbol, in a static display both in initial imagery at the start of a game and in final imagery at the end of said game, during the game the display module being capable of displaying changing symbols in each of said display areas;

an evaluation module that can recognize arrangements of said symbols in said static display including at least one of:

multiple win arrangements of symbols including said wild symbol, by which multiple wins are established; and

multiple win lines related to said multiple win arrangements of said symbols including said wild symbol, by which said multiple wins are established,

wherein said evaluation module recognizes and determines multiple wins based on a pre determined combination of said symbols, in which at least one said wild symbol is included, arranged in such a way that said multiple wins are established by the shared inclusion of said at least one wild symbol in at least two of said multiple win arrangements of symbols;

wherein said evaluation module further recognizes and determines other wins; and

wherein said display module ~~uniquely visually differentiates~~ distinguishably displays multiple wins that include a shared wild symbol from other wins such that one can easily recognize multiple wins that include at least one wild symbol, and uses a time interval to alternately change said wild symbol shared in said multiple wins to distinguish from the other types of said symbols that established said multiple wins.

7.   (Currently amended): The game machine as described in Claim 1, further comprising a selection module that selects a multiplication factor for game points that is pre determined according to said multiple win ~~arrangement~~ arrangements of said symbols, wherein said

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multiplication factor is displayed <u>together with said wild symbol </u>in each of said display areas of said display module where said at least one wild symbol is displayed.

PROPOSED ARGUMENT

1) Demonstration of a wild symbol

Although the Office Action states that the instant specification "does not exclude the presentation of other wins from being similarly presented (page 3)," it actually does distinguishably demonstrate wins with a wild symbol from other wins. At step S5 as shown in Fig. 3, a determination is made as to whether the reels result in a normal game win or one containing a wild symbol. [0053]. If the win contains a wild symbol, the animation features of steps S6 to S9 can be performed. [0054] to [0060]. However, if a normal win occurs, i.e., there is no wild symbol in the win, the program goes from evaluation step S6 directly to step S10 which displays the game results. [0061], [0062] This flowchart explicitly provides sufficient support for visual differentiation of the wins containing a wild symbol. Thus, the specification does exclude the presentation of other wins from being similarly presented.

2) Removal of "uniquely"

Proposed claim 1 is amended to remove the phrase "uniquely visually differentiating" and replace it with "*distinguishably displaying*," which is a more accurate translation of the original phrase that appears in the priority document of JP 2002 343921, filed November 27, 2002, for which Applicants claimed priority in the Application Data Sheet filed with the instant application on September 22, 2003. By thoroughly reviewing the priority document that was filed in Japanese, Applicants discovered that the above phrase was mistakenly translated at the time the application was filed. In the priory document, a regular symbol including one in a static display is "*displayed* (表示)" while the multiple wins with a wild symbol is "*distinguishably displayed* (明示)." Note that a different character is used. In the US application, however, both terms were originally translated as "display" making no distinction between the terms.

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4) Argument against the prior art

The following table compares the features disclosed by the prior art.

Features	Prior Art					
	Bennett	Cannon	Inoue	Yoseloff	Kaminkow	Hamano
Multiple wins			Yes	Yes		
Wild Symbol	Yes			Yes		
Symbol in a static array	Implicit	Yes				
Multiplication factor	Yes					Yes
Multiplication factor displayed with a wild symbol	No	No	No	No	No	No
Wild symbol that is shared	Yes					
Time interval				Yes		
Vibration					Yes	
Win with wild symbol displayed differently	No	No	No	No	No	No

Bennett

Bennett discloses a display of a gaming machine with multiple changing symbols, including wild symbols and a multiplication factor. The display can show multiple winning arrangements. However, it does not show a static array both prior to the game and at the conclusion. Further, winning arrangements with wild symbols are not distinguishably displayed from ordinary wins.

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Cannon

The prior art reference to Cannon was cited to compensate for a feature missing from Bennett. That is, Bennett fails to disclose game symbols in a **static array** both prior to the initiation of a game and after the conclusion of a game. Cannon discloses a device and method for displaying a final gaming result by either **not** displaying non winning results, or by displaying them in a **faded manner**, in order to avoid confusion caused by multiple winning results. In other words, Cannon is essentially designed to display only a **single** winning combination. Cannon expressly states that "*[T]he invention reduces the potential of player confusion ... especially where numerous winning combinations are simultaneously presented on the display screen*" (Cannon, col. 9, lines 24 28).

Inoue

On the other hand, like the present invention, the display device of Inoue is required to present **multiple** wining results **simultaneously**. However, as noted above, Cannon explicitly **teaches away** from a video game having multiple winning combinations. Accordingly, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated or suggested to combine Cannon with Inoue to obtain the same feature as claimed by the present invention.

Yoseloff

Yoseloff was cited for disclosing a wild symbol that changes over time. However, it fails to disclose winning combinations with wild cards distinguished from other winning combinations.

Kaminkow

Kaminkow was cited for teaching the inclusion of a vibration feature for vibrating game elements. However, it fails to disclose winning combinations with wild cards distinguished from other winning combinations.

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Hamano

In the previous amendment, we argued that Hamano fails to disclose a multiplication factor that is selected according to multiple win arrangements (page 14, Amendment of Feb 10, 2011). However, the Examiner was not convinced arguing that Bennett teaches what is missing from Hamano, i.e., wild card symbol comprising "one or more prize multiplier display icons (claim 1)."

Claim 7 is amended to further define the invention by stating that "…said multiplication factor is displayed together with said wild symbol." Support can be found in paragraphs [0018] and [0019], and Figs. 5 8 of the published application. As discussed above, in Bennett, a die, which indicates the number 1 through 6, represents a wild card symbol and "walks" when a winning combination results. Then, when a special feature is triggered, a spinning die will appear on the screen. When the die stops spinning, it will display a number which is the factor by which the prizes will be multiplied for this feature (Bennett, col. 3, lines 36 43). It should be noted that the multiplication number is shown *on* the die (ditto, col. 5, lines 20).

In contrast, the multiplication factor of the present invention is displayed *together with* a wild symbol, *NOT included on the icon* as disclosed by Bennett. This display arrangement of *two* symbols in one area is more effective than the *single* symbol display of Bennett, and thus, "*the player's anticipation to the game result is aroused*" (Specification, paragraph [0018]). Among the cited prior art references, only Hamano and Bennett teach the feature of a multiplication factor, but neither of them teaches or suggest the above feature. Accordingly no prior art reference discloses a multiplication factor that is displayed *together with* a wild symbol.

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